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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 0853
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 0976
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TAGS: AF PK PREL PTER
SUBJECT: PAK-AFGHAN JIRGAS: PRESIDENTIAL CHIEF OF STAFF
RESPONDS TO AFGHAN NON-PAPER

REF: A. KABUL 5270
1B. ISLAMABAD 21073
1C. KABUL 5218

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary and introduction: In a October 30 meeting, Presidential Chief of Staff Hamid Javaid shared with Ambassador a non-paper passed to Government of Pakistan (GOP) from the Government of Afghanistan (GOA) via the UN Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Javaid noted that the GOP envisioned something quite different from the description in GOA paper when President Musharraf agreed to the parallel jirgas during the September 27 Trilateral Iftar at the White House. Javaid also questioned why the GOA elected to pass the paper via UNAMA, rather than through bilateral diplomatic channels, stating that the two governments need to deal with each other directly to reconcile their diverging views of the jirga process. End summary and introduction.

¶2. (C) The Ambassador opened his call on Javaid by noting that the GOA is under the impression that the GOP does not/not want to move forward with the two jirgas discussed at the Trilateral Iftar hosted by President Bush. (Ref C) Javaid responded that this was not true: the GOP remains ready and willing to engage the GOA on the jirga proposal. He suggested that the two sides engage in planning sessions to consider the most appropriate parameters and timing to ensure a successful outcome.

¶3. (C) Having expressed Pakistan's support for the jirga concept, Javaid said that an Afghan non-paper on jirga organization (text in para. 8) had been delivered by UNAMA D/SRSG Chris Alexander delivered to National Security Advisor Tariq Aziz. The non-paper proposed a much larger, broader

gathering than that contemplated by the GOP. The GOA appears to be committing to a large-scale, all-encompassing event drawing participants from the central government and all Afghan provinces. Such a scope would be inappropriate in Pakistan, which intended to draw participants from only from geographic areas populated by Pashtun tribes -- i.e., along the Pak-Afghan border. Rather than focusing on Pashtun tribal leadership, Javaid said that Kabul appears to want a to use the jirgas as a grand modern-day state-to-state darbar.

¶4. (C) According to Javaid, the asymmetries between the Pakistani and Afghan visions for the jirgas extends beyond the breadth of participation. In response to a question by the Ambassador, Javaid affirmed that President Musharraf had asked NWFP Governor Orakzai to coordinate and implement the jirga on the Pakistani-side. The GOP subsequently learned that President Karzai had appointed FM Spanta to coordinate the Afghan jirga, which would require Pakistan to shift at least some aspects of jirga planning to the MFA to maintain parity; unfortunately, as the MFA is staffed by Pakistanis of all ethnic backgrounds, finding an appropriate Foreign Office interlocutor with the requisite knowledge of Pashtun customs could be a challenge. These are matters that the sides should discuss directly before proceeding further, Javaid concluded.

¶5. (C) Comment: The GOA non-paper describes "joint jirgas" that reach far beyond the leaders of the Pashtun tribes that span the Durand Line -- the concept that the GOP carried home from the White House Trilateral Iftar. Without dwelling on any particular issue, Javaid expressed minor annoyance that the GOA non-paper views jirga details as settled matters,

ISLAMABAD 00021223 002 OF 003

rather than as propositions for GOP consideration. Javaid betrayed the same irritation displayed by other Pakistani interlocutors in reaction to perceived GOA overreaching. For example, on question of who would represent Pakistan at the Afghan jirga, it appears that the GOA intends for the GOP delegation to include all participants in the Pakistani jirga; presumably, the GOA would want the GOP to extend reciprocal invitations to all 180-200 participants in the Afghan jirga, a prospect that may daunt even the most hospitable GOP host. The GOA non-paper declares that President Karzai has solicited the assistance of UNAMA in organizing the jirgas (emphasis on the plural, indicating both the Afghan and Pakistani events), presenting the GOP with a de facto third-party facilitator without prior consultation. While not knowing what additional messages the D/SRSG may have personally delivered to NSA Tariq Aziz, post believes that the GOA would have solicited a more positive reaction had it pulsed the GOP reaction to using UNAMA as an emissary and interlocutor.

¶6. (C) Comment (cont): The GOA non-paper unfortunately arrived as the GOP is trying to contain public reaction to the security operations against an extremist madrassa in Bajaur Agency. Also, President Karzai's personal outreach to ANP leader Asfandyar Wali Khan and JUI-F leader Maulana Fazl ur-Rehman has drawn media attention, prompting public grumbling about perceived Afghan meddling in Pakistan's internal affairs. While post is encouraged by Emb Kabul's report that President Karzai reached out directly to President Musharraf with an Eid telephone call (Ref A), The USG must encourage both sides to begin direct discussion of their jirga options as soon as possible. End comment.

¶7. (C) Text of GOA Non-Paper:

(Begin text.)

Jirgas on Security in Afghanistan and Pakistan

Current Status of Initial Planning

-- The purpose of these jirgas is to generate structured

discussion and decisions by national political and civil society leaders from both countries of measures to end terrorism as a major factor fueling insecurity in the region.

-- The Government of Afghanistan is planning to host the first joint jirga will full Pakistani participation before the end of 2006.

-- The current proposed composition of the Afghan jirga is as follows:

Speakers and Vice Speakers of the Meshrano and Wolesi Jirgas (6)

Chairs of Wolesi Jirga Commissions (18)

Chairs of Meshrano Jirga Commissions (18)

Chairs of Provincial Councils (34)

Members of the Ulema Council of Afghanistan (34)

Two respected elders or representatives from each province (68)

Further Parliamentary, political, women's or civil society representatives (10)

Total Afghan participants: 180 - 200

Total Pakistani participants: (to be determined)

-- In addition, the President of Afghanistan and two Vice

ISLAMABAD 00021223 003 OF 003

Presidents would participate. The members of the cabinet (25) would take part as observers, as would representatives of UNAMA and the international community.

-- President Karzai is currently considering several candidates for membership in an organizing committee for the Afghan jirga, but they have not yet been selected.

-- National regional and tribal balance will be respected and preserved but it is not now anticipated that additional representation to be given to border provinces.

-- President Karzai intends to invite President Musharraf and the members of the Pakistani jirga to participate in the Afghan jirga. It has not yet been determined whether the presidents would preside, participate or observe.

-- President Karzai has asked UNAMA to assist the Afghan government with the preparations and monitoring of the jirgas.

-- Exact timing and location have not yet been determined. Given that security is the primary issue, the most probable feasible locations in Afghanistan are Jalalabad and Kandahar. Kabul is also an option.

(End text.)

CROCKER